

BEFORE
THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF
SOUTH CAROLINA
DOCKET NO. 97-239-C - ORDER NO. 2002-481

JUNE 20, 2002

IN	Proceeding to Establish Guidelines for an)	ORDER ON
RE:	Intrastate Universal Service Fund (USF).)	PROCEDURAL ISSUES
)	AND ESTABLISHING
)	DATES FOR THE
)	PREFILING OF
)	TESTIMONY AND
)	EXHIBITS

This matter comes before the Public Service Commission of South Carolina (the Commission) on three issues related to the recent tariff revision filings and filings requesting Universal Service Fund (USF) support from five local exchange carriers (LEC's), i.e. Farmers Telephone Cooperative, Inc., Horry Telephone Cooperative, Inc., PBT Telephone, Inc., Home Telephone Company, Inc., Hargray Telephone Company, Inc., and Bluffton Telephone Company, Inc. (collectively, the companies).

First, the companies have made a motion for confidential treatment of the cost studies submitted in support of their requests, stating that the studies contain proprietary business information regarding the companies' operations and costs, and that, in light of the more competitive telecommunications environment, it is not appropriate to make detailed information regarding the companies publicly available. The companies state that access to this information could give actual and potential competitors an unfair competitive advantage. The companies also note that confidential treatment of these

studies would be consistent with this Commission's prior rulings and prior treatment of similar information.

We agree with the companies, and therefore grant their motion for confidential treatment of the cost studies submitted in support of their latest requests in this Docket. In today's competitive environment, we agree that making the information publicly available could give actual and potential competitors an unfair competitive advantage. We would state that intervenors in the present docket who wish to study the cost information for purposes of this case should consult the companies about the execution of an appropriate confidentiality agreement.

Second, the Commission Staff requests a waiver of language contained in our procedural Order No. 2001-419 which requires that any modifications to the USF factor be made by October 1. Staff requests that, since the documents for possible modification have just been filed, that the date for final modifications to the USF factor be extended to December 1. We agree with Staff and hereby extend the date for final USF factor modifications to December 1.

Third, we need to establish dates for the pre-filing of testimony in this matter. Pursuant to 26 S.C. Regs. 103-869(C)(Supp.2001), the Commission hereby orders that twenty-five copies of the testimony and exhibits of the Applicant shall be prefiled on or before **August 12, 2002**, and that twenty-five copies of the testimony and exhibits of the Commission Staff and/or intervenors shall be pre-filed on or before **August 26, 2002**. (Material may be post-marked on these dates.) Also, any rebuttal testimony and exhibits shall be pre-filed on or before **September 3, 2002**, and any

surrebuttal testimony and exhibits shall be pre-filed on or before **September 5, 2002**.

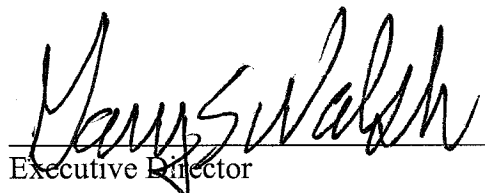
(Material must be in the offices of the Commission and in the hands of the parties on these dates.) It should be noted that acceptance into the record of surrebuttal testimony and exhibits is subject to the discretion of the Commission. In addition, parties shall serve their pre-filed testimony and exhibits on all other parties of record as required by the Commission's Rules and Regulations. All parties are reminded that all witnesses must be present during any hearing in this matter at the call of the Chairman, or the Commission may decline to allow the witnesses' testimony to be read into the record of the proceeding, and/or may decline to allow the witnesses' exhibits to be entered into the evidence of the case.

Please take notice that any party requesting modification of this schedule must file a request for such modification with the Commission.

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION:


Chairman

ATTEST:


Executive Director

(SEAL)